

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT M 00703 150209Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 SY-05 /036 W
-----101994 150215Z /73

P 120800Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3256
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0703

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PP, ID
SUBJECT: APPROACH BY IRIANESE DISSIDENT LEADER

1. JACOB PRAI, IRIANESE DISSIDENT LEADER, SENT A MESSAGE TO ME VIA AN AMERICAN CITIZEN TO THE EFFECT THAT PRAI WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THE AMERICAN MINING COMPANY IN IRIAN JAYA. THE MESSAGE WAS TELEPHONED TO ME AT THE RESIDENCE IN LATE AFTERNOON OF MAY 11 FROM WEWAK, EAST SEPIK, BY PETER HALE, AMCIT KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY. HALE SAID THE MESSAGE CAME TO HIM BY PHONE FROM AN INTERMEDIARY, NOT FROM PRAI HIMSELF. HE SAID THE INTERMEDIARY WANTED TO KNOW IF I OR SOME MEMBER OF MY STAFF WOULD BE IN THE SEPIK AREA ANY TIME SOON AND COULD TALK TO PRAI ABOUT THE AMERICAN MINING COMPANY. HALE SAID THERE WAS A VEILED THREAT OF DAMAGE TO THE COMPANY.

2. I TOLD HALE THAT NEITHER I NOR ANY MEMBER OF MY STAFF WOULD BE IN THE SEPIK AREA IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AND THAT WAS THE MESSAGE HE SHOULD SEND BACK TO PRAI. I ALSO SAID THAT IF FURTHER INFORMATION FROM PRAI CAME TO HALE, HE COULD PASS ALONG TO THE EMBASSY.

3. HALE TELEPHONED E/C OFFICER AT EMBASSY MORNING MAY 12 TO REPORT HE HAD CONVEYED MY MESSAGE AND RESPONSE HAD BEEN TO CONFIDENTIAL

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EFFECT THAT "IF AMERICANS WON'T TALK TO US WE WILL TALK TO CUBANS AND THEY WILL BE HAPPY TO TALK TO US.

4. FOR JAKARTA: I HAVE NO OBJECTION IF EMBASSY WANTS TO PASS THIS "VEILED THREAT" ALONG TO FREEPORT COPPER.

5. COMMENT: IN SAYING NO ONE FROM EMBASSY WOULD BE IN SEPIK

REGION IN NEXT FEW MONTHS I OVERLOOKED FACT THAT JRO EILEEN RILEY PLANS TO SPEND MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND ON TRIP ON SEPIK RIVER WITH BRITISH HICOM JUNIOR STAFF MEMBER. I AM INSTRUCTING RILEY TO AVOID ANY CONTACT WHATSOEVER WITH PRAI OR OTHER IRIANESE DISSIDENTS AS I DO NOT THINK A JRO IS AN APPROPRIATE CHANNEL.

6. HALE HAS BEEN IN PNG FOR SEVERAL YEARS, WORKING FIRST AS AGRICULTURIST FOR CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN NEW IRELAND (WHERE I MET HIM) AND SUBSEQUENTLY WORKING FOR GPNG ON RICE PROJECT IN EAST SEPIK.
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